

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-07 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY NASSAU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4822

INFO CNO WASHDC

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E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID BF

SUBJ: REQUEST FOR BARGES FOR WATER STORAGE

SUMMARY: GCOB MINISTRY OF WORKS, FACING SERIOUS WATER SHORT-AGE SOUGHT ADVICE FROM CONGRESSMAN DANIEL J. FLOOD OF PENNSYLVANIA WHO IN TURN SUGGESTED MINISTRY APPROACH EMBASSY ABOUT LOAN OF TWO ONE MILLION GALLON WATER BARGES. EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE ADVISE AVAILABILITY OF BARGES AND ASSOCIATED COSTS. END SUMMARY

1. NASSAU HAS BEEN EXPERIENCING SERIOUS WATER SHORTAGE PROBLEMS OVER THE LAST FEW YEARS. THE GCOB IS UNDERTAKING LONG-RANGE PROJECTS TO ALLEVIATE THE PROBLEM INCLUDING ADDITIONAL DESALINATION UNITS, A PERMANENT BARGING SYSTEM TO BRING WATER FROM ANDROS ISLAND AND INSTALLATION OF A REVERSE OSMOSIS PLANT. HOWEVER, THESE WILL NOT BE OPERATIONAL FOR AT LEAST ANOTHER YEAR. TO COPE WITH THE IMMEDIATE PROBLEM OF A DRY SEASON THAT BEGINS AROUND NOVEMBER 1, THE GCOB IS ARRANGING THE LEASE OF A 10,000 TON TANKER CAPABLE OF CARRYING ONE MILLION GALLONS OF WATER FROM FREEPORT TO NASSAU.

2. THE WATER SYSTEM IN FREEPORT REQUIRES 24 HOURS TO PRODUCE AND SUPPLY THE MILLION GALLONS. IN THE ABSENCE OF STORAGE FACILITIES IN FREEPORT THE SHIP, IF SUPPLIED DIRECTLY, UNCLASSIFIED

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WOULD HAVE TO REMAIN IN THERE FOR THAT FULL AMOUNT OF TIME.

STORAGE FACILITIES IN NASSAU ARE LIKEWISE NON-EXISTENT AND THE WATER SYSTEM IS SUCH THAT THE TANKER WOULD HAVE TO DISCHARGE THE WATER AT A SLOW RATE.

3. MINISTER OF WORKS SIMEON BOWE CONTACTED CONGRESSMAN FLOOD OF PENNSYLVANIA ABOUT THIS PROBLEM AND WAS ADVISED THAT SURPLUS BARGES OF THIS TYPE (SAID TO BE SURPLUS MILITARY BARGES FROM VIET NAM) ARE PRESENTLY AVAILABLE SOMEWHERE IN LOUISIANA. FLOOD SUGGESTED THAT GCOB APPROACH THE EMBASSY TO REQUEST THE LOAN FROM THE USG OF TWO BARGES CAPABLE OF STORING APPROXIMATELY ONE MILLION GALLONS EACH. ONE WOULD BE MOORED AT FREEPORT AND THE OTHER AT ARAWAK CAY IN NASSAU. THEY WOULD BE NEEDED FOR A PERIOD OF FROM NINE TO 12 MONTHS. (THE REQUEST WAS MADE TO THE AMBASSADOR ON OCTOBER 30.) FLOOD ALSO TOLD BOWE THAT AID MIGHT BE ABLE TO ASSIST IF NEEDED. ACCORDING TO THE CONGRESSMAN, AN ED WILSON FROM AID/W WILL BE COMING TO NASSAU SHORTLY AND THAT THE PROBLEM OF THE BARGES COULD BE TAKEN UP WITH HIM ONCE ALL THE INFORMATION IS AT HAND.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: THAT THE DEPARTMENT DETERMINE IF AND WHERE SUCH BARGES ARE AVAILABLE AND WHETHER THEY CAN BE LOANED TO THE GCOB FOR ONE YEAR. THE COST OF GETTING THEM HERE SHOULD ALSO BE DETERMINED AND THE EMBASSY BE ADVISED WHETHER THE GCOB WILL HAVE TO PAY THESE CHARGES.
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